

SECOND-PARENT ADOPTION

Stable, Loving, Permanent Families

THE FACTS:

Second-parent adoption has been endorsed by:

American Academy of Pediatrics

The American Academy of Family Physicians

The American Bar Association

National Association of Social Workers

Child Welfare League of America

80%
Of Americans
SUPPORT

Second-Parent
ADOPTIONS

States in which second-parent adoptions are permitted by courts:

AL	KS	ND
AK	LA	OK
AZ	ME	OR
AR	MD	PA
CA	MA	RI
CO	MI	SC
CT	MN	SD
DE	MO	TN
FL	MT	TX
GA	NV	VT
HI	NH	VA
ID	NJ	WA
IL	NM	WV
IN	NY	WI
IA	NC	WY

States in which second-parent adoptions are banned by legislatures:

Mississippi
Utah

Second-parent adoption (co-parent adoption) is a legal process that allows a non-married co-habiting parent to adopt her or his partner's biological or adoptive child without terminating the first parent's legal status as a parent. Second-parent adoptions protect children in non-married parent families by giving the child the legal security of having two legal parents. Second-parent adoption also protects the rights of the second parent, by ensuring that he or she will continue to have a legally recognized parental relationship to the child if the couple separates or if the biological (or original adoptive parent) dies or becomes incapacitated.

Utah's current adoption statute deprives children of the security of a strong legal relationship with both of their non married co-habiting parents.

SECOND-PARENT ADOPTION:

Second-parent adoptions protect children by giving them the legal security of having two legal parents, entitling them to crucial financial benefits including inheritance rights, wrongful death, Social Security benefits, and child support. In many situations, second-parent adoptions are important to ensure health insurance coverage for the child and allow both parents to make medical decisions for the child.

THE BEST INTEREST OF CHILDREN

Adoption decisions should be made by child health and social service authorities, on a case-by-case basis, based on the best interest of the child.

Second-parent adoption is about ensuring that children have strong legal ties to both of the parents that are raising them.

PARENTAL AUTHORITY & RESPONSIBILITY

Parents should have the authority and responsibility to decide what's right for their own children.

Parents want what is best for their children and have a responsibility to care for them. If a parent wants to share legal responsibility for their own child, and thinks that having a second legally connected parent is in the best interest of their child, the law should not prevent them from making that decision.

STABLE, LOVING, PERMANENT FAMILIES

Second-parent adoptions create stable, loving families and legal ties that protect children and fosters their emotional and developmental health by recognizing the children's actual relationship to both adults in such families.

DENIAL OF SECOND PARENT ADOPTION HURTS CHILDREN:

* If a child's legal parent dies, the child could be ripped away from his or her surviving parent and away from the only home they have ever known.

* A non-legally recognized parent can be barred from visiting their child in the hospital or from consenting to emergency medical treatment for an injured child.

* If the non-legally recognized parent works and provides for the family, the child may be denied medical coverage under that parent's health insurance plan.